UNITED
NATIONS

A

General Assembly

Distr.
GENERAL

A/RES/52/117
19 February 1998

Fifty-second session
Agenda item 112 (*a*)

RESOLUTION ADOPTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

[on the report of the Third Committee (A/52/644/Add.1)]

52/117. Fiftieth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights

The General Assembly,

Recalling that in adopting the Universal Declaration of Human Rights,[1] on 10 December 1948, it recognized the inherent dignity and the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family as the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world,

Considering that the fiftieth anniversary of the Declaration provides an opportunity for the United Nations and its Member States to redouble their efforts to promote awareness and strengthened observance of the rights set out in the Declaration and other international instruments and declarations in the field of human rights adopted subsequently,

Recognizing the Declaration as a common standard of achievement for all peoples and all nations, as well as the source of inspiration and the basis of subsequent progress in the field of human rights,

Concerned that international human rights standards are not fully and universally respected, that human rights continue to be violated in all parts of the world and that people still suffer misery and are deprived of full enjoyment of their civil, cultural, economic, political and social rights, and convinced of the necessity of respecting fundamental human rights in all situations and of strengthening the United Nations in this regard,

---

[1] Resolution 217 A (III).

Reaffirming that all human rights are universal, indivisible, interdependent and interrelated, that the international community must treat human rights globally in a fair and equal manner, on the same footing and with the same emphasis, and that while the significance of national and regional particularities and various historical, cultural and religious backgrounds must be borne in mind, it is the duty of States, regardless of their political, economic and cultural systems, to promote and protect all human rights and fundamental freedoms,

Convinced of the necessity of protecting and promoting human rights and fundamental freedoms, and determined to take new steps forward, at the national level and with the increased cooperation and solidarity of the international community, with a view to achieving substantial progress in human rights,

Recalling the significance of the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action, adopted by the World Conference on Human Rights on 25 June 1993,[2] as a milestone in the recognition and progressive development of all human rights and fundamental freedoms for all by the international community,

Stressing the importance of ensuring that full attention is given to the integration of the human rights of women into all preparations for and celebrations of the fiftieth anniversary of the Declaration,

Recognizing the fundamental importance of tolerance as an essential element in promoting a culture conducive to the acceptance of diversity and pluralism and thereby to the fuller enjoyment of human rights,

Affirming that everyone is entitled to a social and international order in which the rights and freedoms set forth in the Declaration can be fully realized,

Stressing the fact that realization of the full range of human rights requires effective policies and compliance at the national level, as well as equitable economic relations and a favourable economic environment at the international level,

Convinced that, in the light of the existing level of standard-setting in the field of human rights, a primary task of the United Nations is to promote the universal ratification of or accession to existing international instruments and their full implementation by all States parties to those instruments,

Recalling its decision to convene, during its fifty-third session, a one-day plenary meeting, on 10 December 1998, to celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of the Declaration,[3]

Welcoming the international and national initiatives to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of the Declaration, and commending the efforts made in all regions of the world to promote all human rights and fundamental freedoms,

1. *Welcomes* the activities undertaken by the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to contribute to the celebration of the fiftieth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights,

---

[2] A/CONF.157/24 (Part I), chap. III.

[3] Resolution 51/88, para. 8.

and requests her to continue to coordinate all relevant activities within the United Nations system, bearing in mind the provisions of the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action[2] for evaluation and follow-up;

2. *Encourages* all Governments and other actors to undertake additional efforts to develop education and information programmes, with a view to disseminating the text of the Declaration and arriving at a better understanding thereof, and emphasizes in that regard the primary importance of grass-roots initiatives in promoting, through education and the media, a culture of all human rights and fundamental freedoms for all;

3. *Invites* Governments and the international community to continue to review and assess the progress made in the field of human rights since the adoption of the Declaration and to identify obstacles and ways in which they can be overcome, both through measures at the national level and through enhanced international cooperation, with a view to ensuring full enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms for all, taking into account developments that have taken place during the past fifty years;

4. *Urges* Governments to endorse and implement national programmes for the celebration of the fiftieth anniversary of the Declaration and to ensure wide participation, including the participation of public administration institutions, national institutions, non-governmental organizations, academic circles and all strata of civil society, and thereby to bring the letter and spirit of the Declaration to the awareness of all;

5. *Urges* those Governments that have not yet ratified the international human rights treaties and protocols adopted within the framework of the United Nations system to consider doing so, and calls upon all Governments to implement fully their international obligations in the field of human rights;

6. *Invites* the human rights treaty bodies to give appropriate attention, within their mandates and methods of work, to the fiftieth anniversary of the Declaration and to reflect on their possible contribution to the above-mentioned preparations;

7. *Calls upon* relevant United Nations organs and agencies, in the light of the principles set forth in the Declaration, to make, within their respective mandates and fields of action, an assessment of the state of implementation and the impact of existing international human rights instruments and to put forward pertinent conclusions thereon;

8. *Invites* relevant United Nations organs and agencies, in coordination with the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, to mark the anniversary by intensifying their own contributions to United Nations system-wide efforts to promote and protect all human rights and fundamental freedoms;

9. *Invites* Governments, the Secretariat, the Office of Communications and Public Information of the Secretariat, relevant organs and agencies of the United Nations system, within their respective mandates, including the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, other international organizations and non-governmental organizations, to disseminate widely the Declaration, as well as other international instruments in the field of human rights, with a view to ensuring the universality and full and comprehensive enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms;

10. *Reaffirms* its commitment to continue building on the inspiration of the Declaration through the development of international human rights standards and of mechanisms for their promotion and protection, taking into account developments over the past fifty years, including the adoption of the Declaration on the Right to Development;[4]

11. *Encourages* national human rights institutions, such as human rights commissions, ombudspersons and others, to play a significant role in the activities marking the fiftieth anniversary of the Declaration;

12. *Invites* non-governmental organizations to participate fully in the preparation for and commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary of the Declaration and to intensify their campaign for greater understanding and better use of the Declaration;

13. *Encourages* the Commission on Human Rights, at its fifty-fourth session, to give the fiftieth anniversary of the Declaration attention commensurate with its historical significance.

70th plenary meeting
12 December 1997

---

[4] Resolution 41/128, annex.